



March 5, 2023

Senate Committee on Housing and Development
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, Oregon

Via email

Re: SB 648, concerning vacation rentals on farm and forest lands

Dear Committee members,

Oregon Coast Alliance (ORCA) is an Oregon nonprofit corporation whose mission is protection of coastal natural resources and working with residents to enhance community livability.

ORCA opposes SB 648 with the -1 amendment. This turns the bill from its original intent, which was to restrict STRs (short term rentals) on exclusive farm use land. The amendment would do the opposite, allowing STRs on lands zoned for farm use, forest use or mixed farm-forest.

The Oregon coast is a region plagued with a very high number of STRs, both in towns and in the rural areas, so much so as to have a significant impact on the desperate need for affordable and (especially) workforce housing in the entire region. Outside the immediate coastal strip, most rural land in the coastal region is zoned for forestry (in the hills) or farm, with significant farm-forest zoning in some counties. The agriculture and forest uses are industries, not locations for further vacation rentals – which not only interfere with important regional farming and forestry, but also pose major risk during wildfires, which are an increasing threat statewide, even on the normally high-rainfall coast.

Existing residential structures in farm and forest zones need to be used for longterm rentals. ORCA has already seen how housing in coastal towns is squeezed by the burgeoning permits for STRs there, and the same exact thing will happen in rural areas if the -1 amendments are passed.

Please oppose SB 648 with the -1 amendment.

Thank you,
Cameron La Follette, Executive Director

